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On Pleasure: Why Man is Innately Selfish

In this paper, I will argue that man is a slave to his pleasure and nothing he does is not to serve it. I will use this conclusion to argue that man is incapable of acting in true altruism and thus is incapable of being, in any way, altruistic. The argument goes as follows:

- (i) Every act man makes throughout his entire life is to experience a form pleasure;
- (ii) If man only acts to experience pleasure, man's acts cannot be acts of true altruism;
- (iii) If none of man's acts are altruistic, then man himself is selfish

As men, we believe that we are superior to animals. The sole reason for this is that of the fact that the ape is only a slave to his own pleasure, doing whatever releases one or more of four special chemicals in their brains. As such, we also believe Jeremy Bentham's school of philosophy: utilitarianism, is atrocious. We think to ourselves "why, living a life for the sole purpose of pleasure is barely living at all". [A note: such a thought could also be attributed to hedonism, of course]

What we fail to observe is that we too, are slaves to pleasure, and have been since evolution's creation of the nucleus accumbens. As such we are no more free than the animal, as

¹the near future being in the future of one's lifetime, before the afterlife

even though we may be literally making our own choices, in reality, we too, are being forced to by the invisible hand of pleasure.

One may think he is freer than an animal because he believes he can act, not always on pleasure, and, although this is true, he is still naught but a slave to it. Consider the following: man works. Surely he doesn't feel pleasure as he works, but he still works as a slave to pleasure. This is true because man is always working with the goal of pleasure in mind. Meaning, ultimately, there is nothing we do that is not to experience some form of pleasure at a given time. All human actions are guided by this aforementioned invisible hand.

That is to say that there is no action one makes that does not either:

- (i) Give said doer pleasure;
- (ii) Bring said doer closer to pleasure.

“Well” one may ask, “what about altruism?”. The answer here is fairly obvious: one who commits a purely altruistic act (‘purely’ meaning in no way will this act help him) commits it for the following reasons:

- (i) He receives pleasure from witnessing/causing pleasure in others, which is fairly common;
- (ii) He believes that committing said act will increase his image in the eye of the public,

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thus increasing his pleasure in the near future¹;

(iii) He believes that committing said act will increase his image in the eye of a divine figure, thus affecting his chances of having more pleasure in the afterlife;

(iv) He believes he must better the world for the satisfaction of knowing he has made a change

As such, it is impossible for man to be truly altruistic, insofar as an act of altruism is defined as an act in which one helps another, expecting to enjoy no gain whatsoever. A selfless act (committed by man, at least) cannot exist, ergo a selfless man cannot exist. That is to say, man is innately, and only selfish.

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